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Metro Adult Education Program launches possibilities

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Many may believe that obtaining a GED is a simple task. However, what people sometimes don't realize is that a student must absorb, within a short period, what a typical high school student would gain over several years.

The design of the GED exam is to test the skill levels in areas such as algebra, geometry, chemistry and literature. So, when I see the students in our program walk across the stage in cap and gown at our annual GED graduation, I am overwhelmed with pride, because I know that it took real determination and commitment to pass the test.

Many students that complete our adult education program have returned to our office to thank us for encouraging them to try life again. Some of these students have continued on to institutions of higher learning, such as Fisk, Tennessee State and Vanderbilt universities and Nashville State Community College. Others have completed training to become aviation mechanics, nursing assistants, or have begun a military career.

The intent of the Metro Action Commission Adult Education Program is to provide another chance for adults to complete their high school-level education, which we believe is the launching pad for unlimited possibilities. Participation in our program not only unveils new opportunities for the student, it also opens the door for other resources that will increase the likelihood of success.

Once they are in our program, our case managers and teachers are trained to identify other areas in a student's life that are potential threats to their success. Students with children that are eligible for Head Start are immediately referred to a representative of that program. If they need and qualify for assistance with rent or utilities, we provide payment assistance.

The program also awards regularly attending students with a weekly stipend, which helps with expenses such as transportation.

Partnerships aid job placement

We have established partnerships with other agencies that provide services such as job readiness, placement assistance and other services that will help them succeed. It is generally not the person's inability to complete their education, but rather the lack of resources and skills needed to help them transition to the next level of their life's journey.

We encourage our students to pursue postsecondary education through our college prep program or to pursue other specialized training. Many of the local colleges, universities and trade schools have supported us by offering special tours and enrollment information. Our program covers cost of admission and a portion of their book fees. We believe this concept is important to increase greater

opportunity for higher earning potential for our graduates.

Adult-education programs that seek to link residents with resources are a visible indicator that it is never too late to start again.

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